

Telescopes, Systems and Upgrades Session Summary

Chair: Craig Smith

The session on telescopes, systems and upgrades demonstrated that the field of satellite laser ranging (SLR) is healthy and growing. Speakers during the session described a wide range of new and refurbished SLR instruments all over the globe.

Probably the most ambitious project described came from the Russian Federation where 6 new SLR systems have recently been completed and there are plans to build up to a further 15 stations by 2010, all in support the upgraded Glonass Global Navigation System (GNS).

Not to be outdone, we heard from NASA and US Contractors about a revitalized SLR program that has returned a number of stations to operations (TLRS3 and 4) as well as maintenance and development of the MOBLAS network. SLR 2000 development has also been continued.

Not to be outdone by Russia or the US, China too has entered a new era of significant SLR development as contributions to the Galileo GNS has spurred on rapid SLR activity in this country too. Excellent presentations were provided about a new SLR station built in San Juan, Argentina, as well as significant upgrades to existing stations at Yunnan, Changchun and Shanhhai SLR Observatories.

SLR work however, is a global enterprise and from France we heard that after 30 years of operations the old SLR station (7835) at Grasse has been decommissioned. This station has been replaced by new and more capable systems FLTRS and MEO, whilst the old telescope will find new life as an SLR telescope in Matjiesfontein, South Africa. Plans were also presented for new SLR network in South Korea.

We look forward to hearing about the progress of all these ambitious projects and exciting developments at the next ILRS workshop.